Dairy Farms Workers—Struck-by or Against Injuries

234 dairy farm workers were seriously injured when struck by or against objects in the years 2000-2004
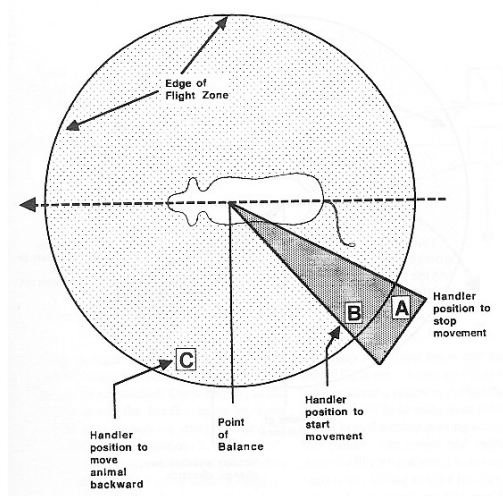

These injuries were so serious that the workers had to take time off work to recover or in some cases, were permanently disabled. Serious injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the base rate of $0.96 per hour per employee paid by employers in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your "experience rating" could increase by as much as 25% in one year to $1.18 per hour per employee.

At first, it may not seem like much but consider this: if you had 5 full-time workers and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about $9,600 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about $11,800 in premiums, or $2,200 more in 2006.

Causes of struck-by or against injuries

Many injuries in the dairy farm industry are directly attributed to inadequate handling of the animals and equipment.

According to the Washington state injury claim reports, workers are most commonly being struck-by or against dairy animals and equipment.

Ways to prevent struck-by or against injuries

- Before starting mechanical work, inspect the area for objects that can be thrown by the machine or equipment. Make sure all equipment is properly guarded as required.

- Maintain even lightning. Bright spots mixed with shadows in alleys and crowding pens will often cause cattle to balk.

- Do not enter a small enclosed area with an animal unless equipped with a man-gate.

- Cows have a blind spot directly behind them therefore sudden movements or noises from behind will spoke them, which might result in a "flight or fight" response.

- Touch the animal gently rather than let the first contact be a bump or a shove.

- Avoid the kicking region when approaching an animal and have an escape rout planned.

Need help? Call 1-800-423-7233 or go to the WISHA webpage at:
htpp://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Basics/Assistance/Consultation

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